

# Kick-off meeting

24, 25, 26 & 27<sup>th</sup> January 2017 - Canigó Grand Site - Marcevol - France

## Thematic Workshop MINUTES

**TW Part one: 24th January 2017 – 14h00-18h30**

TW Part two: 25th January 2017 – 9H00-17h30 (see another document)

TW Part three: 26th January 2017 – 9h00-13h00 (see another document)

The final outcome of the TW was for the partnership to co-write on the Thursday morning (Part Three) the terms of reference for the recruitment of the supplier in charge of conducting the in-depth study on the emblematic dimension of our territories as defined on WP3 (to allow PP5 to launch the tender).

To best prepare each partner to this task and to introduce its territory, the LP hosting the event arranged:

- to give each participant (and newcomers to the network) a proper local experience of each of the 6 emblematic criteria as per defined on the charter of our EMM network. This was achieved through field visits (with relevant mediators, the choice of local services, a musical evening...)
- to invite presenters on related initiatives: AP12 on a national qualitative network which values inspired EMM network and an academic geographer to bring a higher perspective.

**TW Part one: 24th January 2017 – 14h00-18h30**

## INTRODUCTION AROUND OUR EMBLEMATIC DIMENSION

This first part of the thematic workshop consisted of:

- the presentation of the Canigó local context: tourism strategy
- the first presentation of the branding process of “Grand site de France”
- the first thematic exchanges between partners
- the second presentation of the branding process of “Grand site de France”

See in dropbox: ko-TW-Part 1-Pwt 1-Thematic-Workshop-Eu21-Severine-170124

### 1. Presentation of the LP Canigó local context

Firstly, Florian Chardon, the Director of the Canigó Grand site presented in details the Canigó area and its emblematic criteria: historical place, landscape, nature and biodiversity, legend and myth (dragon), inspiration (for painters, writers...), local services (meeting between inhabitants and know-how, famous thermal activities...).

Canigó inspirational force: it is not the highest Pyrenean peak, but the one most people identify with: therefore « inhabitants NEED to climb to the top ».

The tourism strategy of Canigó main objective is the diversification of its tourism attractiveness: to provide a tourism offer not focused only on the peak of the Canigó but also on the surrounding areas (balcony, piedmont, massif...), to manage the flow linked to the peak attractiveness, to extend the length of stay.

Historically, the area was famous for its natural hot springs, very attractive for the European high society. It allowed to develop a first tourism offer and the building of the first refuges/shelters with strong impact for the area. Over the years, local people wanted to go to the refuges by car: projects of inter-valleys road, ski resort, with significant impact on the environment, were considered and dropped thanks to the local active resistance. Ten years ago, several stakeholders decided to stop this tourism development and to promote a new type of tourism and of mountain management. It was the beginning of the “Grand site” policy with the first measures of protection and preservation of natural resources.

Nowadays, Canigó has implemented its policy based on 3 different scales of intervention:

A/ Classified site => Massif around the summit: Canigó Grand site manages the access, the accommodations...

B/ Grand site de France: area involving municipalities around the Canigó massif.

C/ Canigó destination: tourism strategy implemented in partnership with all the local tourism stakeholders.

Because of its heritage, its thermal activities, its hiking opportunities, its natural resources, Canigó Grand Site can imagine becoming a territory for longer stays (1 week). In order to diversify its tourism offer and the peak attractiveness, Canigó Grand Site created 6 different geographical areas with their own specific offer, which already exists but needs to be improved.

See in dropbox: ko-TW-Part 1-Pwt 2-Canigó-tourism-strategy-LP-Florian-170124

## **2. Presentation of the branding process of “Grand site de France”**

*With Camille Guyon, communication manager for the national network of “Grand site de France”, associated partner to the project (AP12) invited by PP1 Sainte Victoire.*

Camille presented principles of the label “Grand Site de France” and criteria for labelled sites:

- 15 sites have received the label Grand site de France
- 24 sites are working to receive the Grand Site de France

A grand Site de France should gather different criteria:

- an iconic cultural and natural landscape, very popular and well known for its beauty...
- facing congestion problems and risks: vehicles, visitors, commercial pressure...
- a protected site, remarkable and fragile

Afterwards, she presented the network, its origin, its main activities, publications and actions.

The network has been created in the framework of a national policy to protect, manage and promote sites.

The ambition is to find a balance between the site, the visitors and the inhabitants.

This label is given for 6 years and is renewable.

The network created in 2000 supports protected sites with the following objectives:

- protection
- preservation and restoration of landscapes
- maintenance and management of the areas
- planning and respect of the site's identity
- development of alternative ways of welcoming visitors
- balance between activities and landscape
- sharing and creation of awareness (children, managers, inhabitants...)
- promotion and facilitation of positive socio-economic impacts

To reach these objectives, the national network provides trainings, dissemination of practices, sharing of experiences, communication tools, partnership with others networks, areas of work in different fields.

See in drobox: ko-TW-Part 1-Pwt 3-RGSF-AP12-Camille-170124

## **3. Thematic workshops on tourism issues:** **“Exchanges of good practices & experiences”**

Participants were divided in two groups to participate to two thematic workshops:



### **- Workshop 1: Territorial brand, territorial marketing:**

Our mountains can have a strong influence and reputation, which can motivate the creation of a territorial brand to increase tourism attractiveness. These territorial brands can be based on various criteria: local products and handcraft, environmental management process, territorial marketing...

Have you implemented such process? What are the conditions and the criteria? Can you assess the impact? What are the limits?

## Workshop 1 Territorial brand, territorial marketing

### What are the main actions implemented on this topic?

You will find below contributions from each partner

To summarise the main actions

- Getting the scale of the promotion adapted to the scale of the targeted group
- Identity and quality seems more powerful than pure branding (qualitative label, approach resting on recognition on the quality of products from the territory)
- The integrity of a brand or label is more powerful when its usage is properly protected by an usage protocol signed by all stakeholders involved (private and public)
- An integrated promotional scheme around one common destination rather than many singular sites is very efficient on the medium to long term since it takes a substantial amount of time to build the trust necessary to establish it.

### Main stakeholders involved in such process

Outsiders visiting the territory or being exposed to promotional actions about the territory

The public authorities managing the territory and its promotion

There was no group of public authorities mentioned since public actors seem to struggle to give up their singular brand for promotional activities they finance even when it would be more beneficial to do so.

Private stakeholders living on the territory.

Business owners present on the territory and promoting their own business.

Groups of local business coming together for joined promotional actions when it makes better sense than singular actions.

Keys of success / conditions of transferability	Main difficulties /solutions identified
PP3 Several scales for several markets / publics	PP3 Conflict of interest: the public decision makers want "their own" brand on everything they finance even if it is not the most efficient way to promote. EXAMPLE 5 counties from Catalonia attending the same fair in Paris under their own brand when a common Catalanian umbrella brand will speak better to visitors
PP9 Eugeni highlighted that private actors have no trouble in successfully coming together for joined promotion when it makes economic sense for all parties involved	
PP4 Use typical product "value" approach To improve the regional perception Example: the slow food products from Abruzzo do more for this area recognition than the regional brand and logo	This was in reaction to too many brands and the resulting absence of logic and absence of international visibility
PP5 Participative decision model Organisation of marketing by sector/target groups/clusters	To protect "over use" of brand (like Olympus on very chemical jam served on airlines trays) To overpass political bias
LP Integrated marketing scheme One destination is bigger than too many brands	Bring to agreement to stakeholders: municipalities committees, the Canigó Grand Site, the tourism office point...
AP12 Example of Camargues: Usage protocol signed by all local actors: public and private come together to get the best possible impact and returns for all	AP12 Example of Camargues: Miss-use of quality label: a sticker with the Grand Site logo was stuck to pumpkins



PP8 Identarian certification are very strong for recognition Example of the Geopark label for PP8 territory	Definition of territory Critical mass territory
PP8 believe without having experimented it yet That a multilevel brand could be a good solution: With a mixed brand / logo Xxxx / xxxxxx Singular entity / common regional entity	
PP7 Benefits from a "qualitative label" Example: their "ruta de pedra seca" gr221 is attractive and replicable / it does more in attracting visitors than a brand	
PP4 Pairing marketing and regional authorities	"corale" was rich initiative to promote 3 territories from 2 countries under one common identity: corfu, Albania, Epirus. It created a lot of public interest among northern European markets but did not go far because of lack of support from public authorities

## - Workshop 2: Preservation of natural site in a tourism perspective:

Our mountains can be very attractive for tourists and it implies impact on environmental issues (erosion, traffic, wastes...). How can we combine a touristic strategy with the preservation of our biodiversity and nature? What are the potential leverages?

Workshop 2 <b>Preservation of natural site in a tourism perspective</b>
Partners' challenges
<p>The partners have different tourism strategies depending on their advantages and weaknesses.</p> <p><b>PP4 Gran Sasso</b></p> <p>Its mountain is not famous enough and the strategy aims at attracting new visitors with a local offer based on local products, know-how, byzantine heritage and outdoor activities...</p> <p>The strategy is based on 3 main objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Come and see =&gt; to attract people from the sea and from the big cities</li> <li>- Test our products =&gt; food, historical heritage, short supply chain...</li> <li>- Remain with us =&gt; to length the stay</li> </ul> <p>Its preservation area: a natural park</p> <p><b>PP5 Olympus</b></p> <p>The strategy is based on the will to reduce the number of visitors to the peak, to control the traffic to the mountain (Reminder: Olympus is located 6km far from the sea and welcome 500 000 visitors each year; 52 km of coastal areas all along the Olympus).</p> <p>Preservation area: a national park</p> <p><b>PP7 Serra de Tramuntana</b></p> <p>The strategy aims to develop a new tourism offer (the tourism is currently concentrating by the sea):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1 brand has been created to enhance the cultural landscape</li> <li>- 1 dry stone path</li> <li>- creation of family path closed to the villages (0,5 day /1 day of hiking)</li> </ul> <p>One challenge is to measure the flow and the environmental impact (waste, erosion...) of hiking.</p> <p>Preservation measures: Natura 2000 area, tourism and environmental strategy</p> <p><b>PP8 Ida</b></p> <p>Tourism characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a lot of tourists during the summer period. Due to the proximity to the sea, visitors are the same and offer opportunity to a combination sea-mountain</li> <li>- a mass tourism at the foot of the mountain</li> <li>- a lot of assets: protected forests, villages, geological resources, local products, hiking activities...</li> </ul>

## Workshop 2 Preservation of natural site in a tourism perspective

Ida Mountain is involved in the Geopark network, famous for its geological resources.

Preservation context:

- a Natura 2000 area
- a natural park, which is not an official "natural park" but a protected area with villages
- a general development plan (regarding protected area)

### PP1 Saint Victoire

Tourism characteristics: main visitors are local visitors => only 25% come from outside the region

The strategy is based on various axes:

- to maintain the number of people on the site
- to remain a "wild" site
- to preserve the site and to avoid its destruction: to limit the number of visitors and of events (it implies a commitment from local stakeholders), to move paths in, if necessary, to protect the fauna and flora
- to create alternative ways of discovering Sainte Victoire (not only by going to the top)

Preservation context:

- Natura 2000
- Grand site de France

### LP Canigó Grand site

The strategy is the following:

- to attract visitors not only on the top but on all the areas (balcony, massif...)
- to raise local people awareness regarding the environmental constraints
- to preserve the biodiversity

Preservation context:

- Syndicat mixte of Canigó is responsible for the management of the protected area
- Grand Site de France
- A new tourism strategy: Canigó destination

### PP2 Cika

Tourism context:

- A mountain closed to the sea => beach very attractive
- Development of outdoor activities, of hiking/biking/paragliding activities...

Preservation context: a natural park

Keys to success	Main difficulties and limits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discussion between local stakeholders to provide a tourism strategy respecting the environment</li> <li>- Increase the inhabitants and local visitors' awareness on environmental issues =&gt; to change the mentalities</li> <li>- Creation of a tourism offer with economical returns for local people=&gt; to involve them=&gt; ex: to convince them to create quality "bed and breakfast"</li> <li>- Discussion of an alternative "paying tourism offer" with an obligation to hike with rangers in order to preserve the natural area?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Relations between LAGs and national park to find a balance between preservation of environment and tourism development</li> <li>- Organisation of vehicles traffic</li> <li>- Mentalities of local people/local visitors regarding the environmental preservation</li> </ul>

#### 4. Perspectives of the “Grands Sites de France” Network (AP12: associated partner 12): Common values and shared vision for a sustainable tourism strategy

With Camille Guyon, communication manager for the national network of “Grand site de France”, associated partner to the project (AP12) invited by PP1 Sainte Victoire.

##### 4.1 HOW CAN THIS WORK INSPIRE OUR PROJECT

The document printed by AP12 on values was a great inspiration to complement the findings of the EMM partners when they wrote their charter in 2015.

Indeed, the qualitative work they produce at national level bears similarities with the profile of the in-depth study that we will carry out during WP3 on our singularities i.e. on the criteria constitutive of the emblematic dimension of our territories.

Characterizing their sites with common values that define them, was a good starting point to refine their sustainable tourism strategy by making sure that the newly proposed relationship with their visitors, will actively integrate and honor each of their value.

This process seems similar to the work that our partner PP9 will compile when translating the finding on our study on our emblematic dimension into a brief marketing for the preparation of our eco-itineraries.

When considering the singularity of the relationships and experience that we want to establish with visitors to our eco-itineraries, we could bear in mind this presentation idea of “shared memory to be created = A “chain of values”.

See in drobox: ko-TW-Part 1-Pwt 4-RGSF-Values-AP12-Camille-170124

##### 4.2 SUMMARY OF THE PRESENTATION

###### Defining us by looking at our site's values

- Heritage value: inner characteristics, what makes the site objectively outstanding, rare, unique
- "Esprit des lieux" (sense of place - *genius loci*) : emotion caused by the site, its distinct personality which creates a specific experience of the place we would like to share with others

###### How did we proceed to identify our values?

- Working groups with sites managers, elected officials, public and private stakeholders, experts...
- Definition of our values and counter-values: unique ≠ standardisation, conservation ≠ degradation, living ≠ museum...
- Organisation by topics: conservation/experience/sustainable development...
- Selection of the top 3 values for each topic
- Explained them with a text in which every word matters
- Got the final document approved by our members
- ☐ Write it down
- ☐ Keep it simple
- ☐ It will be your “Bible”

###### What values did we decide to retain:

###### Unique protected landscapes

Exceptional, unique, singular character, that justifies their protection

- Diversity of natural, human, historical and cultural components
- Natural and cultural values
- Combined work of nature and humankind

###### The "sense of place" and experience of the site

Particular personality of every Grand Site

- Partly objectifiable and partly sensitive to the place
- That takes your breath away
- Particular experience of the place that is unique and that cannot be duplicated
- No standardisation, no loss of personality

###### Dynamic conservation

Global approach to protecting these landscapes

- Including biodiversity, the historical and cultural heritage and the social and economic practices that shape the GS
- Does not mean making it into a museum
- To reconcile protection of the heritage and to maintain it alive
- Inhabitants: their participation in the project to conserve, manage and develop the area

### Welcoming and sharing

- Welcome visitors and share with them the spirit of these places
- Invite contemplation, emotion, and encourage knowledge

### Development of the site

- A plan based on values
- Symbiosis between activities and landscapes
- Respecting the site's identity

### Sustainable economy and local development

- Shared governance based on consultation
- The project itself should emerge from the territory and should improve local activities and products
- A fair distribution of financial contributions to the projects

### Position and role of the manager

- Balance between protection and openness, between visits and conservation
- To predict, to have a long-term vision
- To have an on-going dialogue with stakeholders

## Shared values and vision...For a sustainable tourism strategy

- What kind of tourism do we want?
- What kind of tourism is compatible with our values?
- What kind of experience do you want visitors to live on our site?

## Our approach to sustainable tourism

- Tourism is **a part of a global integrated management project** based on the values of the site
- To offer amenities **respecting the identity** of the place
- **Tourism flow management**
- Tourism that offers **a particular experience of places**
- **Beauty** and **quality** of places, "accessible" for all
- **Inhabitants, fundamental actors of the project**
- To set up a **partnership** and perennial governance of the site

## Our approach to sustainable tourism

The visitor does not come to discover a product but to:

- have an experience
- experience total immersion, to meet people from the place

Need to develop global offers so that the visitor lives a particular experience during his stay: image, visit, stay, accommodation, opportunities to meet other people,

# shared memory to be created = A "chain of values"

Non-market offer is what motivates the visitor: preserved landscape, exchange, immersion, experience

- It contributes to the subsequent creation of a market offer and local economic impacts

### Taking time

Authentic and peopled territories  
Living and welcoming sites  
Considering each visitor as a guest  
Exploring differently  
Enriching  
Understanding  
Being full with wonder  
Contributing to the region's eco-friendly development

